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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/560,497	12/12/2005	Lars Terje Holmaas	PN0324	4578
36335	7590	11/21/2006	EXAMINER	
GE HEALTHCARE, INC. IP DEPARTMENT 101 CARNEGIE CENTER PRINCETON, NJ 08540-6231				KATAKAM, SUDHAKAR
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
		1621		

DATE MAILED: 11/21/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/560,497	HOLMAAS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Sudhakar Katakam	1621	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 December 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 4, 7 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

3. Regarding claims 4, 7 and 12, the phrase "preferably, more preferred and most preferred" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

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6. Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Malthe-Sorensen (US 5,948,940).

Instant claims are drawn to a process for the preparation of iohexol comprising alkylating 5-(acetamido)-N,N'-bis(2,3-dihydroxypropyl)-2,4,6-triiodoisophthalamide with a 2,3-dihydroxypropylating agent, such as 1-chloro-2,3-propandiol, in the presence of a base and of a solvent comprises a C₁-C₅-monoalkylether of a C₃-C₁₀ alkylene-glycol, specifically **1-methoxy-2-propanol**. The claims further contain the purification of crude iohexol obtained from the above process using solvent and co-solvent. Solvent and co-solvent used in this process are **1-methoxy-2-propanol** and C₁-C₄ alkanols.

Malthe-Sorensen et al teaches a process for the production of iohexol, said process comprising reacting 5-(acetamido)-N,N'-bis(2,3-dihydroxypropyl)-2,4,6-triiodoisophthalamide with a 2,3-dihydroxypropylating agent in the presence of a solvent, viz., **2-methoxy-ethanol** (col 2, lines 1-7). The alkylating agent is 1-chloro-2,3-propandiol (col 3, lines 5). It also teaches the purification of crude iohexol using **2-methoxy-ethanol** as solvent and isopropanol as a co-solvent.

The difference between the instant invention and Malthe-Sorensen et al is that the instant invention used the **1-methoxy-2-propanol**, whereas the reference used **2-methoxy-ethanol**.

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of present invention was made, to have modified the reference's teachings by using an alternative solvent, such as **1-methoxy-2-propanol** with a reasonable expectation of success. Please note that the solvent differs by one carbon. One skilled in the art would

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have been motivated to substitute one solvent for another based on such factors as cost and availability of said solvents.

Some limitations of the dependent claims may not be expressly disclosed in Malthe-Sorensen et al. However, these limitations appear to be drawn to tweaking the process conditions. Changing such parameters is *prima facie* obvious because an ordinary artisan would be motivated to optimize a process. Merely modifying the process conditions such as temperature and concentration is not a patentable modification absent a showing of criticality. In re Aller, 220 F.2d 454, 105 U.S.P.Q. 233 (C.C.P.A. 1955).

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sudhakar Katakam whose telephone number is 571-272-9929. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thurman Page can be reached on 571-272-0602. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

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Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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